

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

143
EXCISE

Subject: Meeting of the McCloy Committee 1330 on 31 October

1. Meeting convened with following persons present:

Mr. McCloy
Under Secretary Ball
Under Secretary Gilpatrick
Mr. Boyes
Mr. Springsteen
Colonel Roseborough

2. Initial discussion concerned possibilities of a Soviet "stand down" on anti-aircraft weapons during the United States aerial reconnaissance. Assumption that all strategic air defense weapons were still in Soviet hands was expressed. The hope that the Cubans would also be included in the "stand down" or in any event would withhold fire was expressed.

3. Further discussions touched briefly on the following items:

(a) The possibility of any inspection either during or following the weapons removal was considered doubtful. In this connection it was reported that Mr. Kuznetsov had asserted most clearly to Ambassador Stevenson that the dismantling of the missiles was going ahead.

(b) Point was made by Mr. Gilpatrick that our aerial reconnaissance must continue to be conducted at both high and low level and that the latest photographs have proved inconclusive insofar as reflecting any progress in the dismantling of the missile bases. The thought was expressed that the progress of the dismantling might have been slowest due to the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Soviet commanders and their troops and the desire on their part to conduct this operation discreetly in order to conceal it as much as possible from the Cuban people.

(c) The point was made that it is considered in the US interest to avoid any early meeting of the Security Council so as to not inflame the situation further with the announcement of the lack of success of the Secretary General's mission. The thought that a written report to the Security Council by the Secretary General might suffice to avoid the necessity of holding a public meeting was expressed.

4. A memorandum from Ambassador Stevenson's office posing questions relating to the proper strategy to be followed to meet probable Cuban moves was delivered to and discussed by the committee. The discussion of

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Attachment

No. 8

this memorandum brought up the point that it was probably wise to notify the Russians that US reconnaissance flights would be resumed tomorrow in order to put them on notice and permit orders to be issued for the "stand down" of their air defense units.

5. Mr. Gilpatrick presented the blow-ups of the latest aerial photographs (taken on Monday) and pointed out the inconclusive and tentative nature of the findings. He indicated that the military view was that these photographs reflected little if any dismantling operations and in fact reflected some new construction. He pointed out, on the other hand, that there had been little time for much positive progress to have been made and that at best the results of these photographs must be regarded as inconclusive.

6. The possibility of Castro's forces seizing any of the Soviet weapons elicited the view that even though outnumbered by more than 100,000 Cubans against about 9,000 Soviet military, the probability of a successful seizure was fairly remote. Mr. Gilpatrick pointed out that even the tanks and heavy artillery that the Soviets had in Cuba were not yet released to the Cuban forces but retained in custody of the Soviet advisors.

7. The 4:00 visit of Mr. McCloy to Mr. Kuznetsov was discussed and it was concluded that it was appropriate for the Russians to be informed either privately or publicly that the US was resuming the reconnaissance flights tomorrow and that any incident involving these flights would create a most serious situation.

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M.R. Roseborough
Colonel, USA

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